

mation they can get about the territorial requirements of butterflies. With this object in view I have spent three years attempting to study the mate-locating behaviour of *Hamearis lucina* (The Duke of Burgundy Fritillary). It is too early yet to make firm conclusions but there is no doubt that the species is a 'percher'. In its woodland habitat, where the larva feeds on primroses, the males occupy territories at path intersections and choose perches in grass, nettles or dwarf shrubs. They behave in much the same way as the other butterflies already researched; they make investigation flights, engage in tournaments and battles with other males. They do, however, seem to remain on the same territory from 10.00 hours to 15.00 hours and a high proportion re-appear on the same territory several days in succession. A downland colony, on the other hand, where the larval food plant is cowslip, seems to be showing significant variations. The males choose territories which are packed very close together with the result that there are many more tournaments and battles than in the woodland colony. If there are any entomologists who know this species well I should welcome comments from them on any characteristics of behaviour they have observed.

### References

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ABNORMAL ABUNDANCE OF VANESSA ATALANTA L. IN SOUTH DEVON. — At the end of September and for the first few days of October 1980, my wife and I had a brief holiday in S. Devon near Bolt Head. While we were there we couldn't help noticing the remarkable numbers of Red Admirals that were everywhere along the coast. My first came to our notice when, soon after our arrival, I counted thirty on a patch of ivy blossom near our hotel. They proved to be equally common all along the coast from Start Point to Bantham on the river Avon Estuary, the coastal limits of our wanderings.

The butterflies were very fresh and I am certain were the result of a big local emergence, particularly as full fed larvae and pupae could be found readily on local nettle patches. I even picked up a recently hatched cripple crawling about on the cliff path. Apart from the Red Admirals no other butterflies were represented by more than a few odd individuals.

Here in Wiltshire this autumn I have seen no Red Admirals at all on the flowers in my garden although these have been well patronised by Small Tortoiseshells and a few Painted Ladies. — Major General C. G. LIPSCOMB, The Riding, Knook, Warminster, Wiltshire.